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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6350

July 17, 2001

The Honorable Tommy Thompson
Secretary of Health and Human Services
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW, # 615-F
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:


Thank you very much for your June 28, 2001 letter, which was a response to our May 9, 2001 letter concerning training requirements for acquisition personnel at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). We appreciate the general discussion you have provided on this matter. We are glad to have your commitment to improving small business program performance and the training programs necessary to that end.

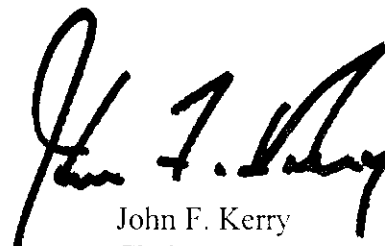
This inquiry into the state of civilian agency acquisition training is one we have undertaken as part of our oversight responsibilities. Under Rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is charged with investigating "all problems of American small business enterprises." Insufficient understanding of small business procurement programs by contracting staff, we believe, is one such problem that impedes small business access to Federal contracting opportunities.

Accordingly, in our original letter, we asked several specific questions about acquisition training at HHS. For your convenience, this letter (including the questions) is attached. We would appreciate your response to each of these specific questions.

We look forward to your detailed response on these questions, and ask that you respond by August 15, 2001. If you have questions on this matter, the staff contacts are Cordell Smith (for Senator Bond) and John DaSilva (for Senator Kerry). Both may be reached at the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship at (202)224-

Sincerely,


Christopher S. Bond
Ranking Member


John F. Kerry
Chairman